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*Science & Art Department,*

*Estimates.*

*Debate on Estimates, - July 19, 1869.*

*[Extract from Hansard's Debates.]*

*16. 12. 69.*









contribute to the support of the family. The result at present was that one-third of those under ten were on the school books, but only one-sixth of children over ten. He did not believe that any education would be effectual until the older children were, to a certain extent, subsidized by the State—say that, in addition to the allowance to the schools, 1s. 6d. a week was given to each child. It was a lamentable fact that of the 2,400,000 children between ten and fourteen, there were only 388,000 who presented themselves for examination, and that of the children that were brought under examination the half did not remain at school more than one year. It appeared that while £560,000 was spent on education proper, £90,000 was spent on the machinery, and he would suggest that a considerable saving for the purposes of a State subsidy might be effected by localizing the inspectors, whose salaries were £36,000, and personal expenses over £32,000 a year. In Ireland a large number of the inspectors were localized, and the result was that their personal expenses were small. In the county in which he lived they had no lack of schools, and the landlords, the clergy, and the tenants were all willing and anxious to encourage education as far as they could, but the difficulty was to get the children to come to the schools. A species of bribe, in the shape of school treats and excursions, was there held out to induce the children to attend for the number of days that was necessary to admit them to the examinations. He believed that local inspectors, who knew something of the character of particular districts, and could discriminate between the agricultural and the town populations, would do better than inspectors sent from head quarters; and the saving that might be effected in the salaries of the latter class of officers would enable them to offer a small grant of 1s. 6d. per head or so for every child over ten or eleven years of age who had attended school for a certain number of days in the year. Some slight incentive of that kind would, he believed, tend to counteract the temptation which poor parents were under to accept any amount of employment for their children instead of keeping them at school. Its working would, he thought, be satisfactory, and it would give a permanence to education which was now greatly wanting.

MR. BAINES said, he could assure the hon. Member for Chippenham (Mr. Goldney) that the majority of children attended school for much more than a year. They might not attend the same school all the time, but their gross average of attendance was greatly above a year; he believed it was more than five years. He wished to offer his tribute of thanks to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Forster) for his able speech and for the judicious views he had expressed on the subject of education. In the very populous districts with which both he and the right hon. Gentleman were connected the sentiment on behalf of popular education was universal. The extreme apathy and great prejudice which formerly existed in reference to that question had entirely vanished; and but one feeling now prevailed, —namely, that every child in the country ought to receive education; although how that end was to be attained was, no doubt, a matter of considerable difficulty. The recent extension of the suffrage supplied a strong argument for a wider diffusion of the benefits of education. He believed that the limits of the elective franchise far exceeded the limits of education, and the safety and honour of the country demanded that such a state of things should be corrected. Still, great progress had been made within the present century in the spread of popular education. At the commencement of this century the education of the people in England was most deplorably neglected. In 1818, the number of scholars in daily attendance was only 674,000, and, in 1858, it had risen to upwards of 2,500,000. A pamphlet issued by the National Society, the other day, proved a most triumphant case for that society; and, as one who did not belong to that institution, he was happy to render the tribute of his admiration to the immense efforts in the cause of education made not only by the clergymen connected with it, but also by their congregations; and he should conceive the abstraction of their energies from the work of education to be one of the greatest calamities which could possibly happen. In 1831, the number of scholars in daily attendance in Church schools under the cognizance of the National Society was only 380,248; in 1837, it was 470,188; in 1847, it was 955,865; in 1857, it was 1,187,086; and, in 1867, the number had increased to up-



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wards of 1,505,856; and including night schools, but excluding dames' schools, the number was 1,654,437. Since 1830 there had been a sixteen-fold increase in the circulation of periodicals, newspapers, and other works of popular literature. He trusted, therefore, that his right hon. Friend would have great encouragement and good materials to work upon when he should produce his plan next year. He had a strong conviction that by the extension and improvement of the half-time system of labour and schooling a great deal might be done in the agricultural districts. His hon. Friend the Member for Devon (Mr. Acland) and the hon. Member for Norfolk (Mr. Read) had said what was quite true, that many of the agricultural districts were ahead of the manufacturing in regard to the numbers who were being educated. Mr. Paget, the late Member for Nottingham, had originated a system for the children on his estate which had worked most admirably, and he had told him (Mr. Baines) that the labourers were much more valued now that they were educated than they were before. Mr. Paget's was a half-time system, not precisely a half-day, or half-week, or half-month system, but a system which enabled children to continue their profitable labour, and to remain under education to a much more advanced age than they would otherwise be able to do. There was a large number of children in this country who went to school for four or five years, but who afterwards forgot not only writing but reading too. And here he would wish to pay his tribute of respect and acknowledgment to the zeal with which the late Government attended to the representations which he, for one, had made for the extension of the grants to schools, which by the original conditions of the Privy Council were excluded. There was a class of schools, especially those of the Nonconformists, who were most anxious to have religious education given along with secular; but, owing to their principles, they would not take Government money which seemed to be given for the teaching of religion. They therefore abstained for a long time from receiving any Government grant for the schools. At length—and he must confess himself to have been one of those who had undergone conversion—they had come to the belief that they might,

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in consistency with their principles, take the money for secular education, while they supplemented it by giving religious education themselves. The noble Duke (the Duke of Marlborough) and the noble Lord opposite (Lord Robert Montagu) met him in the most frank spirit, and the noble Duke introduced a Bill in the other House to enable the Privy Council to make grants to all schools that gave secular education, provided they made it plain to the inspectors that the secular education was good. And here he would say that he attached the greatest possible value to the system of inspection. He believed the two main conditions of success were—first, the excellence of our inspection—the ablest men being sent to do the work; and, secondly, the perfect liberality with which all religious denominations were treated. He was glad to see the noble Lord (Lord Robert Montagu) and the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles Adderley) present, both of whom, he was happy to acknowledge, had displayed the same enlarged spirit of liberality. He thought that if they extended their grants to the smaller schools in the country which found a difficulty in meeting the present requirements of the Government, the results would be most beneficial. He trusted also that permissive powers would be given to communities like Birmingham, which were desirous to have the power of rating themselves in order to supplement that education which was at present neglected. He was not opposed to secular education where no other system was practicable; but he hoped we should never see a system established in this country from which religion should be compulsorily excluded. How was it possible that where, under the National Society alone, 1,500,000 children were taught, we could think of introducing a system of that sort? He was sure that other denominations in this country would be found as zealous in promoting religious instruction, and it was that which formed the character and the man. By all means, then, let us have fair play for the religious element, and then he trusted that, by the combination of secular with religious instruction, all the children in this country might receive a full education.

Mr. WHEELHOUSE said, he was most anxious to see every child in the country, no matter what his condition



in life, educated—at all, events, to a certain extent. He believed the country to be extremely deficient in the matter of education. But he thought there were one or two points deserving of consideration before the introduction of any measure on the subject. He agreed with the suggestion which had been thrown out relative to the appointment of a Commission to ascertain the several systems in operation in different countries, so as to form a basis for future legislation in this country, and thought it might be desirable to try some experiments in our larger towns, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it might not be possible to reach one class which had scarcely been touched by any class of educationalists. Large numbers of children were known to the State only through the policeman and the magistrate, and if left uncared for they would develop into habitual thieves, harmful to themselves and to all with whom they had to do. It was better to spend money in educating such children than in maintaining gaols for their reception. He could not help thinking that much more might be done by the extension of the half-time measure, and an alteration in the mode of carrying it out, and would suggest that half the week should be spent at work and the other half at school, instead of spending one-half of each day at work and the other half at school.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he was sorry to cut short a debate which had proved so fruitful of suggestion; but it rather bore upon a question not before the House. It indicated pretty clearly, however, the kind of measure both sides of the House wished to see introduced as early as possible. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Baines) in his remark with regard to the extension of the Government grant to secular schools; but, while admitting the liberality of the late Government on the subject, observed that the whole matter had been postponed in the belief that a general measure would be introduced next year. The hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) had proposed a Commission to the Continent. If in existence, the Report of such a Commission would be no doubt useful. But as it was the duty of the Government to be ready with a Bill next Session, they must set to work upon it immediately, and there was really no time to wait for

more information, which, in truth, was not needed. The difficulty was, not to obtain knowledge of the existing state of things, but how to meet the difficulties which beset the question on every side. Referring to what he had said respecting militiamen and young men who had left school eight or ten years, his noble Friend (Lord Robert Montagu) seemed to infer that he was attributing the facts to the operation of the Revised Code; but it was the old system and not the new one which was responsible for them, as they were the result of a state of things which existed before the Revised Code came into operation. It was his own opinion that there had been a decided improvement within the past few years, and he doubted whether five or six years hence a similar Return respecting boys who had left school would be so unsatisfactory. He was sorry to say that one-third must be deducted from the register to get at the average attendance. He wished success to the hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Dixon) in his efforts to induce the tax-payer to care little what sum was paid for taxation, but the Government must consider not merely the feelings of those who would willingly tax themselves, but the feelings of the whole population, including those who were not earnest in the cause of education. He had reason to hope that throughout the country less and less importance was being attached to the mere question of money, but they must still expect difficulties to arise from that source. Under any system he believed it would be unwise to relieve parents of the one-third which they now paid, because they could not be safely relieved of their responsibility for their children. It was not to the interest of the cause of education to relieve parents of their liability, because success must depend largely upon their co-operation. Nor did he wish to get rid entirely of the large sums contributed for educational purposes by benevolent persons. It was true the acceptance of their aid involved some disadvantages, such as too many schools in some places and too few in others; yet they brought to bear an amount of zeal and interest which no one who had the cause of education at heart would utterly refuse, but would rather seek to make the best of, and, if necessary, to supplement. The Government had the subject of educa-



tion under consideration; but at present they had come to no definite plan or scheme upon the subject, and it was unadvisable then to say anything in reference to it other than that the noble Lord (Lord Robert Montagu) in what he had stated had merely given the Committee his inferences from the Report, and he ventured to add, with very little ground for making these inferences. He wished, however, to remind the Committee that an educational rate did not necessarily imply free schools. As the half-time question had been frequently alluded to, and could not escape the attention of any Government, he would say that the result of his experience was that in the textile fabric manufactures there was great advantage in having children at school half the day, and at work the other half; but how to apply half-time to other employments, and particularly to agriculture, was one of the most difficult of questions. Undoubtedly the rule which answered in the case of the textile fabrics might utterly fail in that of agricultural labour. No one was more sensible than he was of the difficulties which surrounded the question of education, but he felt, as he believed Government would feel, encouraged by the tenor of the discussion that evening.

MR. E. POTTER said, he thought justice had hardly been done to one part of the question, and that was this—there was a large part of the population who could not afford to pay for the education of their children, and who must, therefore, be dependent upon the State. He did not believe that any measure would do the good required unless it involved the State in considerable outlay for the classes too ignorant to appreciate education, and too poor to pay for it. He would not on any account meddle with the present system; the object was to reach a class whom the present system did not touch; and that could not be done without resorting to compulsion, which was eminently unpopular with the working classes. It was not merely the school pence, but the loss of the earnings of their children, which would weigh with persons whose wages averaged 15s. or 16s. a week; and, having regard to these things, he feared that any measure which did not embrace free schools would be an abortive one.

COLONEL SYKES said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the

Council (Mr. W. E. Forster) at the commencement of his remarks had spoken rather depreciatingly of the Scotch system of education, but he (Colonel Sykes) begged to state that there was no country in the world, not even excepting Prussia, where compulsory education had been adopted, where so large a proportion of the people could read and write. Lord Advocate Gordon stated in the House of Commons that 1 in 20·5 of the population in Scotland attended schools; 1 in 24·9 in Prussia; and only 1 in 50·7 in France. What was taught in the parochial schools of Scotland was not merely the “three R’s.” He held in his hand the reports made by the inspectors of forty-five parochial schools in Aberdeenshire, which he had shown to his right hon. Friend; and from these it appeared that the education given there included English, English grammar, English composition, writing, arithmetic, geography, mathematics, Latin, and Greek, and in one school at Elgin thirteen boys were learning French. Teaching the “three R’s” was not imparting education. They were only a means to an end. They were only what knives and forks were to a dinner. In the parochial schools in Scotland the enlarged teaching was owing to 76 per cent of the teachers having received a University education, the numerous small bursaries and moderate fees enabling persons of humble origin to qualify themselves as superior schoolmasters. Here, in London, the Lord Chief Baron, in charging the grand jury the other day, stated that twenty-two out of the twenty-four prisoners could neither read nor write. He agreed with the hon. Member who had last spoken that there were families who could not afford to educate their children, and who, therefore, regarded State assistance as a necessity. He looked upon night schools as being of the greatest advantage to the labouring classes, by keeping up and increasing the little knowledge acquired in early youth.

*Vote agreed to.*

(2.) £158,253, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he would make a short statement in reference to this Vote. It was to complete the sum of £232,223, which seemed an apparent increase on the previous year’s Estimate

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of £13,423; but of that amount £12,991 was merely the re-vote in consequence of the winding up of the Paris Exhibition, and the real increase on the Vote was only £432. The sums applicable to institutions other than those in London were—for the Edinburgh Museum, £7,347; for the Dublin institutions, £14,979; and for the Geological Survey, £20,500; making a total of £42,826. Of the £189,427 remaining, £9,103 was required for the central office, £26,100 for aid to science schools, £32,150 for aid to art schools, £3,000 for preparing papers, £6,660 for inspection and examination, £3,000 for travelling, £600 for sundries, and £2,000 for the reproduction of objects of art for the use of the provinces, £2,515 for the School of Naval Architecture, £10,463 for the School of Mines and Geological Museum, and £750 for the College of Chemistry. Of the remaining £93,086, £24,000 was for the new building for the Museum and School of Science at South Kensington, and £3,000 for that at Bethnal Green, being a decrease of £8,500 under the first head, and of £4,000 under the second. Of the remaining £66,086, £41,439 was for the expenses of the South Kensington Museum, and £24,647 was for purchases. Those sums included £8,647 for purchases from the Paris Exhibition, as well as £4,344 for furniture, being both of them mere transfers from previous Votes. Thus the total sum expended upon the management of the South Kensington Museum was £37,095, and upon purchases £16,000, making together a total of £53,095. He had stated the Estimate in this way because he wished to dispel the impression that the South Kensington Museum monopolized the great part of the Vote, and he had shown that only a small part of the expense was incurred for that institution. As it was said that this was a case of London against the provinces, he would observe that a considerable number of pictures in the South Kensington Museum were circulated in the provinces, and the museum itself was visited by persons who came from the country nearly as much as by residents in the metropolis. The museum was becoming more and more appreciated every year. In 1868, 103 Art schools were aided, as against ninety-eight in 1867, and the scholars in them in 1868 numbered 18,475, as against 17,341 in

1867. The night schools had increased in much greater proportion. In 1868, they amounted to 130, as against seventy-two in 1867; and in these night schools the number of scholars was 4,571 in 1868, as against 2,553 in 1867. There was also an increase in the numbers of the schools for the poor in which drawing was taught. They amounted in 1868 to 778, as against 588 in 1867; and the scholars learning drawing were 93,713 in 1868, as against 79,411 in 1867. He had therefore to ask for a considerable increase on the Art Estimate—namely, £5,000, from £27,150 in 1868, to £32,150 in 1869; and he was happy to say that he had to ask for a much larger proportionate increase in science—namely, from £18,900 last year, to £26,000 this year. He would compare the state of things in May, 1869, with their condition in 1868, because so much attention was now paid throughout the country to the subject of science, that science schools and scholars were increasing every day in number. In May, 1869, there were aided 509 science schools—separate institutions—as against 300 in May, 1868. The separate classes in different sciences in May, 1869, were 1,500, as against 789 in 1868. The students under instruction in May, 1869, were 25,000, as against 15,000 in May, 1868. In the last May examination the papers worked were 24,085, as against 13,112 in May, 1868; and the number of students who went up for examination in May, 1869, was 13,000, as against 6,800 in May, 1868. Those figures showed that a very great increase had occurred under all those heads, and if the increase went on in the same proportion, it would, while being very much felt in the Estimates, show that a great desire for scientific education was taking hold of the population, for the money voted was so much assistance given exclusively to the artizan class. This had been referred to by Professor Huxley, in an article in *Macmillan's Magazine*, who said that the effects of these schools would be very great. He had acted as examiner under the system, and he expected not to have less than 2,000 sets of answers mainly from the artizan class, while other examiners were likely to have three or four times the number of papers. While quoting Professor Huxley, he must, however, add that he stated, in his evidence



before the Committee last year, that the time was come when it would be of advantage to have some kind of training for the teachers in science. He must call the attention of the Committee to the position of our higher schools in London. We had four schools, one for art and three for science. He dared say that hon. Members would be surprised to hear how very little the Art School at South Kensington cost the country. The grant for that school was £3,900, as against £4,600 last year, and of that amount the sum of £2,000 was for the maintenance of students from local schools. The remainder was a payment to the masters. Of the three science schools, one was the School of Naval Architecture, for which he asked this year, £2,515. It was established by the Duke of Somerset for the education of young men from the Royal Dockyards, and also for private dockyards, and to a great extent it was self-supporting. Another was the School of Chemistry, which was an excellent school and very well taught, but which was very much hampered from the want of room. The grant required for that school was £750. The third was the School of Mines and Geological Museum in Jermyn Street, for which he asked this year £10,063, as against £12,003. That sum of last year was necessary in consequence of the special expenses required in the shape of buying leases. This school had been alluded to as merely an institution for teaching mining; but that was not the case, as it was, in fact, a most excellent school of science, and had connected with it some of the best Professors in the country, such as Professor Tyndall, Professor Huxley, and Dr. Percy. These three schools were scattered over different parts of London, and undoubtedly there would be a great advantage in bringing them together, and forming them into one school of science, which might be used as a training school for masters. Of the £25,000 now asked for completing the buildings at South Kensington, not more than one-half would go to the museum, and at least another half ought to go to the school of science.

DR. LYON PLAYFAIR: Sir, I am glad that the hon. Member for Banbury (Mr. Samuelson) has directed our attention to the important question of Science instruction in this country. I need not remind the House in detail of the various

public recognitions which it has already received. After the French Exhibition of 1867, the Schools Inquiry Commission issued circulars to the leading English jurors who had served on that Exhibition; and their united testimony was that England is not holding her own in the industrial progress of nations, but that other nations, by increased attention to science, are making rapid advances which must soon enable them to run equal with, if not to pass, this country in the race of industry. The nation was, undoubtedly, much moved by this report, and public national conferences were held in London, Edinburgh, and in the leading provincial towns, to consider a question so grave to our interests as an industrial country. At all of those resolutions were passed calling upon the Government to promote education in science throughout the country, and to give inducements for the foundation of special technical institutions in the chief centres of industry. The Government at that time quickly responded to this public feeling, and issued instructions to our Ambassadors and consuls abroad to report on the state of scientific instruction among the people of foreign States. They also accepted the offer of my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury, to visit the leading technical institutions on the Continent, and to report his impressions, valuable from his large manufacturing experience. The House also appointed a Select Committee to examine the whole subject, and their Report has been for some time before it. The Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Buckinghamshire took a large and statesmanlike view of this important question. We are told in the evidence of the then Vice President of the Council (Lord Robert Montagu), and of the officers of the Department of Science and Art, what were the views entertained by that Government. They saw that in this country there were few opportunities of learning science of the highest class in its bearings on productive industry, and they wisely considered that it would be better to develop existing institutions — such as University and King's Colleges in London, the Owen's College in Manchester, the Universities in Scotland, and the Queen's Colleges in Ireland — rather than to create a large number of new institutions. In all of these there are

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courses of science fitted for general education, and which could be developed at small cost. But while proposing to use these materials, the then Government saw that a few institutions of a more technical kind might be required, and they admitted the urgent need of training teachers in science, so as to supply secondary schools throughout the country. A draft Minute to this effect was under consideration by the late Government when they went out of Office, and the power was transferred to this side of the House. The Liberal Government, which now succeeded, was naturally looked to as certain to see the gravity of this question, and to sympathize with the wants and wishes of the industrial classes. But the difficulties in its way were great, for there was an urgent necessity for contracting the expenditure of the nation; and the efforts necessary for accomplishing large retrenchments are not favourable for projects involving increased expenditure, even when they relate to a productive purpose. While these fully justify any delay in meeting the public demands, they do not justify a reversal in the policy of the previous Government, if that policy were founded on justice and wisdom. That Government had indicated their intention to aid local efforts, when these were fully and clearly made. They were no doubt largely influenced in this policy by finding that the cry for science instruction was not made by mere theorists, but that men of high manufacturing eminence, like Whitworth, Sir David Baxter, and James Young, were willing to contribute munificently to its advancement. In consequence of this policy, local efforts were made. The men of Glasgow subscribed more than £100,000, and met a response from the Government. The men of Manchester followed their example, and subscribed £13,000 for a Chair of Engineering in the Owen's College, and £54,000 for building a new one, fitted to be a great technical institution. They naturally believed that Government would meet them half-way, as they had done in the case of Glasgow. They were justified in their hopes, for they had proved the existence of a real want in the fact that the Owen's College had 350 students at science classes during the day, and 200 in the evening. With aid from the State, a high technical College might

have been erected in one of the most important of our industrial centres. But the manufacturers of Manchester were discouraged by the Government, which held out no hopes of present or of future aid. I refer to this case, because I believe that the policy of the late Government was a wise, one when they proposed to supplement existing action and to develop existing institutions, rather than to create new ones solely dependent on the State. The reply that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will probably give is, that if Manchester desires technical instruction, she ought to provide it solely at her own expense, and without coming to the State for aid. If the State have no duties in promoting manufactures and commerce, and in removing the obstacles which impede their development, this answer would be satisfactory; but no one can surely contend that the State can neglect such duties with safety to the country. No one knows better than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London (Mr. Lowe), how backward our secondary education is in all matters relating to Science and Art. In his celebrated speeches at Edinburgh and Liverpool, he pointed out how profoundly the secondary education of the country requires alteration. No doubt, a large and important step has been made in England by passing the Endowed Schools Bill through both Houses. If this Bill be well worked, and if the Commission to which it is intrusted fully understand the importance and the responsibilities of their duties, an immense impulse may be given to the study of Science and Art in this country. But this is not enough. It has been well said that "every true science bears necessarily within itself the germ of a cognate profession." But then these germs require development in the soil of Technical Colleges or of Universities with Technical Chairs, and every country except our own has already founded, or is actively engaged in founding, schools for such development. The hon. Member for Banbury (Mr. Samuelson) has alluded to the importance of our creating a College of Science for the training of teachers, and I quite agree with him. But while we are only talking, France has done it. I hold in my hand a letter which the Minister of Public Instruction has done me the honour to address to me, explaining the



nature of the new Normal School at the Hotel Cluny, and proposing a system of international change between the science teachers of England and France, so that they might learn the language and the technical wants of both countries. I am ashamed to reply that England has no science teachers in training, and that we cannot profit by his wise proposal. Perhaps the Government may consider itself justified in resting on the action of the Department of Science and Art for diffusing a knowledge of science among the working classes. I do not under-rate their action, and see with pleasure the rapid growth of scientific studies among the working classes of this country. Last year 25,000 persons have been encouraged to some knowledge of elementary science, through this Department. The Government have intrusted to it a sort of scarifier to scratch the surface of the soil, but no plough to go deeply into it, so as to ensure the growth of any crops. We have two educational departments of the Privy Council, running side by side on parallel rails, but never touching each other for fear of a violent collision. This is not for the benefit of the public. If the Department of Science and Art is to fulfil its mission, it ought to extend its benefits to the elementary schools of this country. A few evenings since, I had occasion to tell you that three centuries of experience in Scotland had convinced us that higher subject, introduced into primary schools, gave to them a life and ambition which re-acted powerfully on the higher education of the people. I also pointed to the fact that England was the only civilized State in Europe which limited instruction in the primary schools to "the three R's." Until you make a coherent organization of the Educational Departments, so that they act in harmony and co-operation, the diffusion of science will only be slight and partial. When the taste for science has permeated the elementary schools, mechanics' institutions and the like will rise into efficient secondary schools for the industrial classes, though higher schools than these are required to train foremen and managers who will enable this country to hold its own against foreign competition. The Department of Science and Art is showing a disposition to aid provincial schools, and an extension of its benefits necessarily leads to increased

Estimates. I shall read to you the views of a great statesman on this point, in a speech delivered in 1862, in reference to the Estimates of that year—

"It was complained that this Vote was increasing. That was the very merit of it. If the principle was a wrong one, let it be altered. But as long as they adhered to the rule laid down, there was a necessary increase, especially in the provisions for the circulation among the country schools of examples of Art."

The statesman who then wisely and sagaciously, as I think, saw merit in increasing Votes when the expenditure is productive, is now Chancellor of the Exchequer. But under his rule I regret to find this very Vote, which he so strongly commended, altogether vanished from the Estimates. Last year, a Minute of the Committee of Council was issued to provincial schools, promising them a participation in the art-treasures of London. This was, no doubt, in deference to the Report of a Select Committee of this House in 1864, which recommended—

"That the collection of works of decorative Art at South Kensington be made more generally useful than at present throughout the country, especially in connection with local museums."

Accordingly, a sum of £14,000 appears in last year's Estimates for this purpose, though the full amount does not appear to have been asked for; but this year the Vote for this important object has vanished altogether. I need not remind the House that expenditure is of two kinds — unproductive and productive. While we should be jealous as to the increase of the one, we should encourage the increase of the other. If you do not sow, neither will you reap. One of the most economical nations of Europe — Switzerland — understands this fully, and in some of the leading cantons spends one-third of the whole taxation on education. She was forced to this large expenditure because she was cut off from the raw material of industry. Switzerland has to send to Belgium for coal, or to Saarbruck in Germany, or to St. Etienne in France, and yet she thrives as an active manufacturing nation. She does so because she has recognized the fact that, in the progress of the world, the value of the raw material in manufactures, as an element of production, is constantly decreasing, while the value of science, skill, and knowledge, is as constantly increasing. Let us contrast the position of Switzer-

*Dr. Lyon Playfair*



land with Ireland. The latter is much nearer the sources of all raw material, and is locally more fitted to be an industrial nation than Switzerland, yet her only manufacturing industry is that of flax. It is true that the selfish protective policy of England has crushed her attempts at industrial development. We stamped out her woollen and leather manufacture, then crushed, as they arose, hopeful industries, in silk, cotton, sugar, soap, and candles. Well, we have long since repented of these national crimes; but, if we would atone for them, let us give to Ireland those means of acquiring knowledge which will far more than compensate for her lack of the raw materials of industry. The people of Ireland are showing more disposition than the people either of England or Scotland to study science, for they see that without it there is little hope for their future. Let us encourage this growing taste wisely and liberally. We have done this year a great act of justice to Ireland, and next year you will doubtless improve the laws in regard to the tenure of land. But unless you open up channels of industry to conduct off the increasing population, that will flow back upon the land as it has done in times past, and again drown the prosperity of Ireland. England and Scotland, blessed with the raw material of important industries, may, without advanced technical education, continue for some time to compete with the more highly educated countries of the Continent, but Ireland cannot. Her only hope is that the skill, science, and intelligence of her people, as in Switzerland, may compensate for her local disadvantages. A great statesman, Sir Robert Peel, long since warned us of the danger then looming in the distance, but now much nearer, when he said—

"If we are inferior in skill, knowledge, and intelligence to the manufacturers of other countries, increased facilities of intercourse will result in transferring the demand from us to others."

This is the kernel of the whole matter. Our peculiar system of education, limited chiefly to the ancient tongues, has now put our middle and higher classes in this position. If you think we can wait till this rights itself, without any stimulating action on the part of the Government, then inaction will be justified in your eyes. Yet even then it must remain remarkable that all the great in-

dustrial States of Europe and America are giving their energies and their treasures to the advancement of technical education, while we are practically doing nothing. I freely admit that our difficulties are greater than theirs. We already spend much more on educational objects from Imperial taxation than any other Continental State. This is owing to the fact that primary education in foreign countries is supported by local taxation. Their general taxation is applied to secondary and higher education, while with us it is mainly applied to primary schools. Our efforts consequently appear large, while the results attending them are uncommonly small; their efforts, as measured by taxation, appear small, but the results are large and important. Hence, as regards our Chancellor of the Exchequer, the difficulty of a large and vigorous action is great, for the burden of Imperial taxation for educational objects is already heavy in appearance as compared with other countries, though not so in reality, for local taxation does not appear in the Budget of a nation. The only remedy is to economize the unproductive expenditure, and thus obtain funds for that which is productive. We have a strong Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a strong Government from whom large economies have already resulted. Let us hope that these will soon enable them to consider this question in that spirit of wise liberality which I think it deserves. Much wiser men than myself see the danger of delay. A few weeks since, Dumas, formerly Minister of Commerce in France, said in the theatre of our Royal Institution—

"Science is no longer an unrecognized power. To-day, every Government which does nothing for it must expect to be vanquished by rivals, and to receive the censure of posterity for its want of forethought."

MR. JACOB BRIGHT said, that he considered it his duty to challenge the impartiality of these Estimates. A sum of £130,000 was granted for Universities, Colleges, learned societies, museums, and for kindred purposes. Of this sum England received £36,000, Scotland, £46,000, and Ireland, £48,000, including in this latter sum grants to the Queen's Colleges. In the great manufacturing districts of the North of England, whose population was counted by millions, and of which Manchester might



be regarded as the centre, not one shilling of the public money was spent in the support of any institution whatever. If that exclusion was to be kept up, he thought there ought to be a satisfactory defence for it. It could not be pretended that none of the public money was given to these manufacturing districts on the ground that they were better educated than the rest of the United Kingdom. The population of Lancashire and the adjoining counties had been too much absorbed in business pursuits to allow their education to keep pace with other matters. Whatever they might boast of, they did not boast that they were better educated than their neighbours. The Government could not refuse them assistance on the ground that there was no special channel through which that assistance might be conveyed. Owen's College in Manchester, was founded twenty years ago by a merchant who left £100,000 for that purpose. It started with sixty-two students; it had now 210. At the commencement twenty-eight persons attended the night lectures in the institution; the number of persons who now attended them was 473. The College had a staff of Professors inferior to that of no other institution. The building was inadequate to accommodate more students, and there was a scheme on foot to extend it. It was proposed to raise £150,000, of which nearly £90,000 was absolutely collected. It was only fair and reasonable that the Government should do something, because the late Government had given £120,000 to Glasgow. Manchester would think itself fortunate if it got half this sum, the payment of which might be spread over four or six years. But when they asked for help, they were told that London, Edinburgh, and Dublin were capitals — a comfortable doctrine for the inhabitants of those cities. It should, however, be remembered that a provincial town received more benefit from £20,000 spent within it than it received indirectly from an outlay of £100,000 in the capital. Glasgow was not a capital, but they were told it had a University, and that Manchester had only a College. But a College was sometimes better than a University; and, besides, Owen's College would one day become a University, and all the sooner if it received a fair measure of assistance from the Govern-

*Mr. Jacob Bright*

ment. There were a good many Universities and Colleges that received aid in the United Kingdom besides those of the capitals. The people of Manchester made no complaint of the assistance given to the Scotch Universities; but they felt that the extension of the system to their own district would be highly beneficial, for at present the Scotch, with their admirably managed parochial education, supplemented by instruction at the Universities, carried nearly everything before them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had behaved somewhat harshly towards the people of Lancashire in this matter, and implied that there was a want of self-respect on their part, in coming to London to seek for pecuniary aid to local effort. He wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact that Owen's College was not intended for the sons of the wealthy, but for those of small tradesmen, and of professional men of small means, and that even working men from Oldham were known to attend the evening classes. One-fifteenth part of the £130,000 to which reference had been made was paid by Lancashire, and he wished to know what loss of self-respect on their part was involved in asking for a portion of the general fund to which they so handsomely contributed. He was not certain that the reputation for wealth which Lancashire enjoyed had not stood in the way of their obtaining what they needed. Lancashire, undoubtedly, had been a wealthy county, and, he believed, would be so again; but the present was a time of failing fortunes and great commercial difficulty, and Lancashire, accordingly, was much poorer now than she was ten years ago. The First Minister of the Crown, of course, knew that in his native county the evening Science classes had been more successful than in any county in England; but what became of all the young men who studied in those classes? In the earlier part of the evening, the Vice President of the Council had spoken of children receiving elementary instruction who, after passing the third standard, went away and forgot everything which they had learnt, not having gone far enough. And so it was with the young men attending these science classes; they wanted to be gathered into Owen's College and carried further in the path of instruction, and with some moderate



assistance from the State this could be accomplished. No doubt, there was a difficulty in knowing where the Government was to draw the line. But he would say let them require conditions, such as existed at Owen's College, before giving State assistance; let there be an adequate population, an institution already past the experimental stage, and a large amount of local gifts, and the Government then need never fear that the public purse would be unduly invaded. The population of Manchester was precisely of that class in the midst of which it was desirable that a learned community should grow up, and he trusted that another year would see them better treated in this respect. He was expressing, he knew, the feelings of many hon. Members when he declared that it ought to form a part of the national policy to encourage real and earnest efforts at improvement such as Manchester had made in this case.

LORD HENRY LENNOX said, he thought that the constituencies of England—recalling the speeches made by those who sat in that House, and who tried to get into that House, last November, as to the vital importance of the question of education—would have been surprised could they have looked into the House half-an-hour ago, when barely a quorum of Members were present.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, there were still fewer on the Opposition than upon the Government Benches.

LORD HENRY LENNOX said, that he had no wish to institute invidious comparisons, but he was bound to remind the right hon. Gentleman that there was an official duty to be present which was more binding upon the Treasury than the Opposition Benches. With regard to the merits of the question, he had nothing but a meed of praise to give to South Kensington Museum. As to the Society of Arts, of the Council of which he was Chairman, he had heard it said that they poked their nose into everybody's affairs; but they really only did so when they could promote the moral and material interests of the country at large. With regard to technical education he thought there was nothing which tended so much to its development as national museums; and upon their good government, and their being rendered accessible, depended in a great measure their success. Some weeks ago

he wished to put a Question to the Government, having reference to the propriety of circulating works of art; he did not know to which Minister to address himself, as there were four or five collections belonging to the Crown under as many different authorities, and accordingly he was obliged to put his Question to the First Lord of the Treasury, fixing upon him the collective responsibility of the Government. In putting that Question he had been careful to intimate that he wished those objects of art to be circulated not only in Edinburgh and Dublin, but in Manchester and the other great hives of industry, and the right hon. Gentleman, in answer, said that the Government were anxious to do everything they could, that two collections of Turner drawings had been chosen and would be established in Dublin and in Edinburgh. Establishment, however, was different from circulation; and, in his opinion, the great want of the present day was that the superfluities of the London collections should be circulated among the populous towns in the provinces. It was therefore with great regret that he perceived a reduction in one item connected with the very principle of circulation which he desired to see carried out. A Vote, which last year stood at £4,000, was this year reduced by £500. It was certain that the Trustees of the British Museum were buying water colours of Turner's and storing them away in portfolios, while the Trustees of the National Gallery were making up parcels to be sent to Dublin and Edinburgh, and what he wanted the Vice President of the Council for Education to explain was why there had been a decrease instead of an increase, in the manner contemplated by the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright). He trusted that some explanation would be given of the reason for the reduction of this Vote, and that every facility would be afforded for the circulation throughout the provinces of specimen and duplicate works of art.

Mr. BOWRING said, he did not object to the fact that this Vote exceeded by £7,000 the sum which was originally asked for; but the detail showed that whilst there was an increase of £20,000 on certain items, there was a decrease on other items of £13,000. He found that the figures of the Estimate, as they now appeared, were quite different from those



originally presented. In the original Vote there was not a single farthing for circulating objects of Art. He noticed with regret that the sum of £500 had been struck off the Vote for scientific scholarships. With regard to the expenditure on account of the Paris Exhibition of 1867, an engagement had been taken that the whole amount should not exceed £116,650. Yet there were fresh demands coming in, and the Vote was still entirely open.

LORD ROBERT MONTAGU hoped that as allusion had been made to his Draft Minute and to the evidence which he had given before the Committee of last year, upon Scientific Instruction, he might be permitted to make a few explanatory remarks upon the subject now under discussion. The learned Professor (Dr. Lyon Playfair) had alluded to a Draft Minute which had been prepared by the late Government. This was intended partly to carry out a Minute of the 21st of December, 1867. By that Minute poor children, in the common parochial schools, were enabled to obtain scholarships that would partly support them if they went to a higher school. Under the same Minute scholars from the various parochial schools might compete for scholarships of £25 per annum on the condition that an equal sum was contributed towards their support at a higher school by the locality. A third portion of the Minute established exhibitions which would enable these poor scholars to proceed to College for three years. It was thus put in the power of poor boys in the parochial schools, who evinced peculiar talent, to rise and obtain the highest education that the country could supply. In order to carry out this system with the greatest efficiency, it was proposed to establish eight Colleges, which it was hoped would be representative Colleges, throughout the country, one at some seaport in the South of England, another in some agricultural district in the West, others in the eastern and northern counties, and some in Scotland. Thus high scientific education would be brought home to the pupils, and be given to them within easy reach of their families. He styled these Colleges representative Colleges, because the studies of each would be peculiar to itself, and bear the character of the industry in the midst of which it stood. Thus it was proposed

*Mr. Bowring*

that the scientific education to be given at the College of the seaport in the South of England should be of a maritime character, and that in the West should be of an agricultural character, and so on. The late Government having that object in view had entered into communication with the local authorities at Manchester, who had already a large sum in hand, owing to the bequest of Dr. Owen and other sources—and hopes were held out to them that the scheme he had thus indicated would be carried into effect. Unfortunately, just about that period it was surmised that the result of the elections was likely to be adverse to the then Government, and the matter was not carried further, as it was thought, by those in authority over him that it would be unfair to take the management of the plan out of the hands of their successors. He was sorry to learn from the hon. and learned Professor below the Gangway and from the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not seen his way to carry into effect a proposal which would have been beneficial to the country and would eventually have secured an actual saving in future times. He would also allude to another plan which he trusted some day to see put into operation. In the district schools at Limehouse and at Hanwell pauper children were taught as they were taught in parochial schools, with this exception—that they received two hours' instruction in the morning only, the afternoon being devoted to other pursuits, some learning drill and naval exercises, as at Limehouse, or music, drawing, shoemaking, carpentering, or other trades. He had spoken to the masters of both those schools, and they had assured him that under this system the boys learnt much faster and more thoroughly than they did when kept the whole day at their "studies." Three advantages thus accrued; the studies were fixed more firmly in the memory; the principles of a trade or profession were at the same time acquired; and the bodily exercise increased the physical health and strength. Why should not this system be extended to all parochial schools? The girls it is true spent their afternoons in learning to sew, because of the moral benefit which would accrue when they had homes of their own. Why should they not also learn



cooking, and the rearing of children, and acquire habits of thrift and the principles of hygienics? And why should not the boys learn gardening or the principles of some trade? This would, to some extent, overcome the obstruction of the labour claims. Children would then remain at school to learn that which would advance them in after life. The Duke of Newcastle's Commission printed a Report, by Mr. Senior and Mr. Chadwick, strongly in favour of this method, and, therefore, he wished to direct the attention of the Government to the advantages of introducing this system into the parochial schools.

MR. POLLARD-URQUHART said, he wished to know, if the accounts for the Paris Exhibition would be soon closed, and whether the Vote of this year was in addition to that of last year?

MR. B. SAMUELSON said, he wished to know whether the Normal School at South Kensington was to be governed by a special Committee; and also whether it was to be understood that £12,000 was to be given for its support?

MR. RICHARDS said, he wished to bear testimony to the value of the Geological Museum, and of the information furnished by Dr. Percy upon minerals submitted to his examination. As a proof of the value of education in practical science, in which the Germans and other foreigners were superior to us, he might state that an hon. Member of that House had introduced a new process of smelting silver ore, and had placed at the head of his manufactory a German; also a manufacture of spelter, which was superintended by a foreigner. The same hon. Member had also a German to superintend the converting of sulphurous acid gas into sulphuric acid. The superiority of the Germans arose from the attention to such studies in their own country. He should never grudge a fair expenditure for technical education in this country.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he was very glad to find that the House of Commons took so great an interest in his Department. In reply to his hon. Friend the Member for Westmeath (Mr. Pollard-Urquhart) he had to say that the £8,647 expended by South Kensington was a re-vote of a portion of £15,000 voted for purchases of articles exhibited at the Paris Exhibition. South Kensington had taken furniture to the amount of

£4,300; but this latter sum was not a new demand, but was a portion of £14,000 spent at Paris. In reply to his hon. Friend the Member for Exeter (Mr. Bowring) he must observe that in his explanation of the Estimates he had taken them as they stood. With the noble Lord opposite (Lord Henry Lennox) he regretted that only £3,500 were to be spent in circulating articles from South Kensington. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had felt obliged to request him to go carefully through all the Votes of his Department with the view of making them as economical as possible; but he believed that more would be done with the £3,500 than hon. Gentlemen might suppose. To the hon. Member for Banbury (Mr. Samuelson) he might say that the question whether the Government would put the organization of the new school of science under a special Commissioner was one which required more consideration. All he could state was that Government was desirous of getting this school into operation as quickly as possible. It was well known that the Government had the whole system of education under consideration, and in considering it, they must, of course, direct their attention to the question of scientific and technical education. During the discussion that evening on elementary education every hon. Member must have felt that even with the utmost economy it was likely that large additional demands would have to be made on the country. That fact must make the Government very careful with regard to any pledges on the subject of scientific and technical education. There seemed to be a general feeling that if parents and neighbours did not do their duty in respect of the elementary education of children the State must step in. But when they came to scientific education it was not a question of doing a duty which ought to be discharged by others, but rather one of guiding and stimulating those who were engaged in that branch of instruction. He was in hopes that the alteration in the endowed school system would enable portions of their endowments to be applied in the cause of scientific education.

LORD HENRY LENNOX said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had rather misunderstood the scope of his question. He had asked whether the



Government could not do something to force the trustees of other collections, who had a plethora of articles, to circulate them through the country, as the collections at South Kensington were circulated.

*Vote agreed to.*

(3.) £75,203, to complete the sum for the British Museum.

MR. WALPOLE, in moving the Vote for the British Museum, said, the Estimate for 1868-9 was £99,385, whereas the Estimate for the ensuing financial year was £113,203. The increase was caused by £12,789 being required for new buildings and the repairs of the existing buildings, and by an extra sum of £1,140 being required for cataloguing. The grant of these additional sums would, he believed, be entirely approved by the House and the country. The first of these items depended upon the increased accommodation which was about to be given for the exhibition of the objects of antiquity preserved in the Museum. The Committee must be well aware that for a long time some antiquarian objects had been kept under sheds, and it had now been deemed desirable that they should be exhibited to the public. The plan which the trustees had resolved to adopt was that which was recommended in 1861, and which had received the sanction of the Government—namely, the extension of the room where the Elgin marbles were now exhibited, so as to enable the trustees to exhibit, in a consecutive series of chambers, the various articles which were not at present exhibited at all. An expenditure of £12,000 odd had been sanctioned by the Treasury for this purpose. The buildings would be extended in a direction which would enable the trustees to exhibit the articles now out of sight of the public, and also to carry out ultimately the scheme which had been approved by the House of separating the Natural History Collection from the Collection of Antiquities with a view to give increased accommodation to the latter. The other item of increase was £1,140 in respect of additional catalogues. He need hardly expatiate on the enormous utility of accurate and exhaustive catalogues. Those relating to Hebrew literature were now, he was glad to say, completed. The catalogue of Spanish literature was in progress.

*Lord Henry Lennox*

But it was of still greater importance that a classified catalogue of all the MSS. in the Museum should be taken in hand without delay, and rendered as complete as possible. For this reason he had great confidence that the Committee would sanction the proposed increase of expenditure. Following the course he had adopted in previous years, he would now refer to some matters which had occurred during the last twelve months, and which, in his opinion, were deserving of attention. It would be satisfactory to the Committee to know that there had been a progressive increase since 1864 in the number of persons who had visited the Museum to inspect the general collection or gone there for purposes of study. In 1865 the number of persons admitted to see the general collections was 365,900; and, in 1868, it had increased to 461,000. In 1865 there were 477,000 persons who visited the Museum for purposes of study as compared with 575,000 in 1868. Representations had been made to the trustees by Members of that House and others respecting the difficulty experienced by readers in obtaining books, more especially on Saturdays. There was, in fact, enormous difficulty sometimes felt in attending to the requirements of the enormous number of persons who frequented the reading-room. On ordinary occasions the attendants were able to give out the books as they were demanded, and, as a rule, within the space of ten minutes; but on some occasions, especially on Saturdays, between twelve and two o'clock, so many persons applied for books that great delay occurred in supplying them. On such occasions twenty minutes or half-an-hour elapsed before books were delivered. The trustees had carefully considered the whole subject, and on their behalf he wished to remark that the frequenters of the reading-room ought to attend more strictly to the printed rules in order to prevent delay. Some of the written applications for books were so defective or illegible that it was impossible for the attendants to find the volumes required. In order to meet the pressure on extraordinary occasions the trustees had increased the number of attendants, and he trusted that, in future, the books would be delivered to students within ten minutes or a quarter-of-an-hour of their being applied for. The average



number of readers daily last year was 350, and the average number of books consulted by each was twelve a day. The Japanese Collection had been brought to a state of great perfection during the past year; indeed, the collection of books printed and manuscript relating to the literature, history, politics, poetry, law, and philosophy of Japan could hardly be equalled in any other European country. Then, 350 volumes representing Abyssinian literature from the 15th century to the present time had, thanks to the India Office, acceding to a request made by the trustees, been added to the treasures of the Museum. He would only add that the accounts of the British Museum, of which the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Candlish) had complained that the audit was not so complete as it ought to be, were now periodically submitted to the Audit Office, and were specifically audited from month to month, and the House had full opportunities of considering the manner in which that audit was carried out.

*Vote agreed to.*

*Resolutions to be reported.*

*Motion made, and Question proposed,*

"That a sum, not exceeding £10,978, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1870, for the Salaries and Expenses of the National Gallery, including the purchase of Pictures."

MR. BENTINCK said, that the system of purchasing pictures for this institution had not been carried on in accordance with the true principles of economy. There were very few people in this country who objected to paying a good price for a good article; but he had constantly noticed, year after year, that works of art had been offered to the National Gallery for sale, or that the National Gallery had had opportunities of buying them at public sales, and that they were refused, either by the Director or the responsible body, when so privately or publicly offered to them—but that afterwards the very same pictures were bought for the nation at greatly enhanced prices. A wasteful expenditure of public money was the consequence of that irresolution and vacillation. In 1867, two pictures, attributed to an artist of the 15th century, were brought to England and offered to the Director of the National Gallery, who

would then have nothing to do with them. Afterwards, another Director of that Institution went to Florence, where he saw those two pictures, and paid the large price of £600 for them. Again, in June, 1867, a picture by a Dutch artist—Van Huysum—was sold at Christie's auction-room, and fetched 380 guineas. In April of last year another picture by Cuyp was also put up to auction at the same place, and knocked down to the same dealer for 384 guineas. Now those two pictures had lately been acquired for the National Gallery for the sum of £1,800. Why did not the authorities of the National Gallery, if they wanted those pictures, go to the auction-room and buy them? Many instances of the same kind had happened at South Kensington. He was not entering into the question of taste, but into that of economy. He was ready to admit that the last-named pictures were valuable, and such as ought to be seen where they now were; but he could not understand why those who bought for the nation could not buy upon the same rules, and as advantageously, as private purchasers. Moreover, there was a conflict between four or five different departments, all of which had the power of buying pictures. Among them were the South Kensington Museum and the National Portrait Gallery. Last Saturday week, some very remarkable works, by Hogarth, were sold at a public auction-room in London, and he was rather surprised that none of them found their way to the national collection. He was told that the National Gallery desired to buy certain of the pictures offered at that sale, but the Portrait Gallery said they were in their department, and they should buy them. Then, when a picture of great interest was bid for, the price became high, and ultimately the Portrait Gallery did not buy—the reason given being, that they had not enough money. Surely there ought to be a proper understanding between the different departments, by which, instead of competing with each other valuable pictures might be secured for the nation on reasonable and advantageous terms. He had seen the spectacle of the different departments that had the charge of art, bidding against each other. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: We have put an end to that.] Then let them put an end to it in the case of pictures also. Every year



the Director of the National Gallery went abroad to buy pictures, and there adopted the same fatal principle as was adopted in England. The late Director used to make a sort of progress through Italy—he presumed the present Director did the same—and he dealt with the Italians as the agent of the English Government. However clever an Englishman who had pictures to sell was, an Italian dealer was three times cleverer, and should be met with his own weapons. He knew several pictures bought in the North of Italy, which, if negotiated for by private persons, might have been purchased considerably cheaper. Foreign vendors think that England is a nation of gold—that the English Treasury is inexhaustible—and they would never come down in their terms when they knew they were dealing with the Director of the National Gallery. There was another point to which he wished to call attention; and that was, as to the lamentable effects, of late years, of scraping or “restoring,” as it is called, the pictures of the National Gallery. On the 9th of August, 1867, his noble Friend the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho) called attention to this subject, and his hon. and learned Friend the present Solicitor General was brought specially from circuit, and had a brief handed to him by the representatives of the National Gallery. His hon. and learned Friend, in a speech of course able, and, to himself, no doubt convincing, said he was quite sure that no artist or person conversant with art could deny that the restoration of the pictures referred to was satisfactory. But his hon. and learned Friend would probably now be convinced that part of his statement was made under a delusion, for he would hardly find any gentleman really conversant with art, and who preferred that pictures should not be “made beautiful for ever,” who would agree with the opinion which his hon. and learned Friend then expressed. As to one of those pictures, the celebrated landscape of Rubens, which had been presented by Sir George Beaumont, it was really impossible for anyone who knew the top of a picture from the bottom not to be satisfied that it had been totally and completely destroyed. Then there were the two beautiful Caraccis and the beautiful Tintoretto, all of which exhibited the same signs of ill-usage. Now, some

*Mr. Bentinck*

fifteen years ago exception was taken to the manner in which the pictures were being cleaned, and a Committee was appointed which did not arrive at any positive result, for all manner of clever people were employed to show how mistaken those were who supposed the pictures were destroyed, and they said that just a few years of London smoke and dirt would restore them to the state they were in before. But there the pictures were, and nobody could doubt that the Claude and other pictures had been materially injured. And so it was with the Rubens. And what was the cause? It was that the Trustees of the National Gallery had employed an Italian picture-cleaner. But all acquainted with Italian picture-cleaners must know what ravages they had committed in Italy, and it was no surprise, if they were introduced in England, that the same result should follow. He wanted to know why were not English picture-cleaners employed, for they were superior to any in the world. They had heard to-night a good deal about protection; but if in France or Italy an Englishman were put at the head for the purpose of restoring pictures the Government would be at once condemned. When they found that noblemen and gentlemen who possessed valuable pictures could get them cleaned without having them injured, why should not the Trustees of the National Gallery get the same thing done? He should also desire to know from Her Majesty's Government where the art library collected by Sir Charles Eastlake, for the purchase of which he found £2,008 charged, was to be located, whether in the National Gallery or where else? We had other art libraries. There was one in the British Museum and one at South Kensington; but he should like to know whether that of Sir Charles Eastlake was to be left at the National Gallery? That would not be a following out of the principles of economy.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he could not help saying one word about the Rubens. His hon. Friend (Mr. Bentinck) had remarked that no one who knew the top of a picture from the bottom could fail to admit that this picture had been entirely destroyed. Now he, on the contrary, must say that it had been greatly improved, and that all his hon. Friend had proved was that he did not know the top from the bottom. He







